

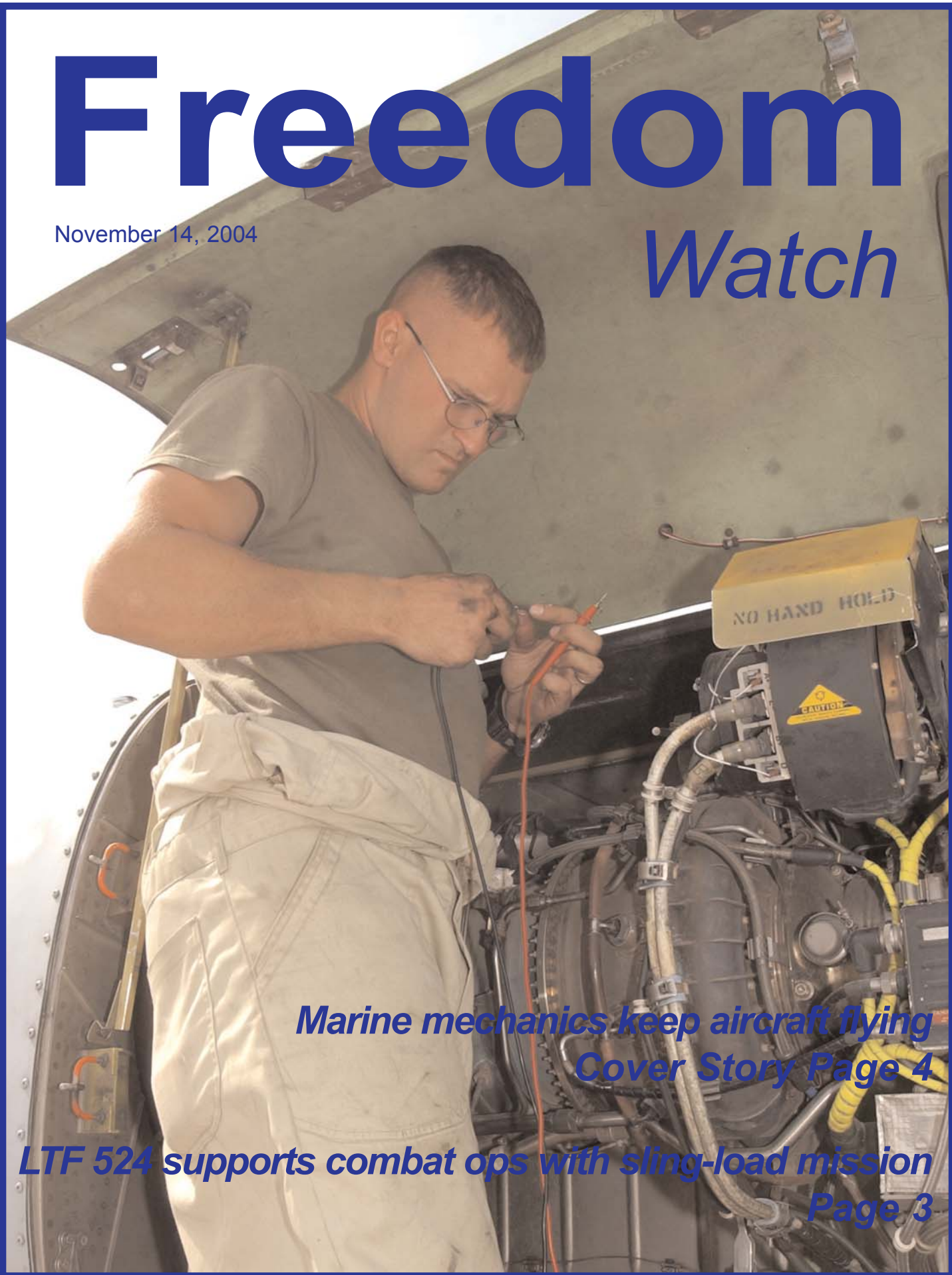
Freedom

November 14, 2004

Watch

Marine mechanics keep aircraft flying
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LTF 524 supports combat ops with sling-load mission
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Master Sgt. D. Keith Johnson

Developing defense

The Chief of OMC-A, Air Force Maj. Gen. Craig Weston, listens intently as Afghan Deputy Defense Minister Abdul Rahim Wardak (left) makes a point at the second Joint Integrated Program Review. The group meets monthly to assess progress within the evolving Afghan Ministry of Defense. The goal of JIPR is to assist the Afghan MoD in establishing systems to better provide for its own defense.

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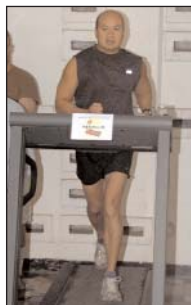
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Freedom Watch

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up up and away!

Resupply missions keep troops in the fight

Story and photos by Spc. Cheryl Ransford
17th Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan — Throughout Afghanistan, units rely on each other for mission accomplishment.

One example of this was apparent during a sling-load mission conducted by Logistics Task Force 524. The task force sling-loaded more than 8,000 pounds of ammunition to another unit at Forward Operating Base Lwara in eastern Afghanistan.

As part of their mission at FOB Salerno, LTF 524 is responsible for controlling the flow of ammunition.

"We received an alert from Lwara the morning of Oct. 9, saying that one of the units was in direct contact with the enemy and was in need of more ammunition," said 1st Sgt. Lamont Hall, a logistics task force first sergeant.

Since the ammunition was needed as soon as possible, Hall decided the best course of action was to have the ammunition sling-loaded from a CH-47 Chinook helicopter.

"We were lucky to have the Chinook available since we don't have any assigned to (FOB) Salerno," said Cpl. Brad White, LTF 524 squad leader. "But either way, we were ready to do whatever it took to accomplish the mission."

As soon as the alert was received, Hall put together a team of sling-load personnel to handle the request.

"I selected four other personnel from the sling-load team to assist in delivering the ammunition and bringing back the sling-load equipment," he said.

Once the aircraft was ready go, Hall's team was on their way to provide assistance to their comrades at FOB Lwara.

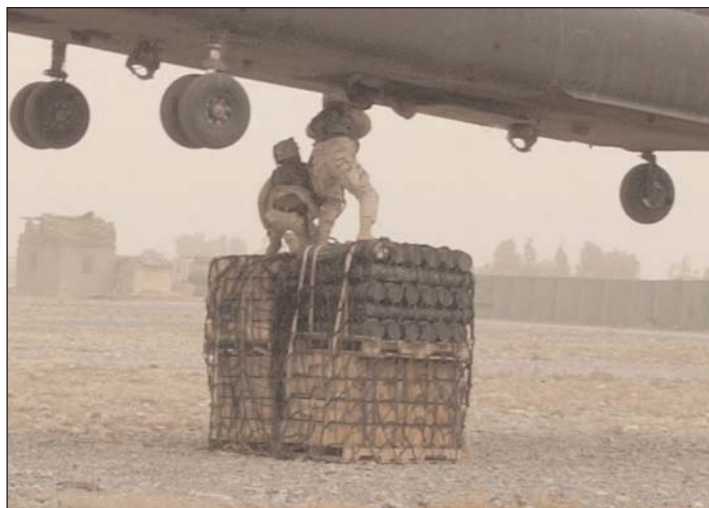
"There was one team flying to Lwara to recover the equipment and a second team that was designated to hook up the ammunition to the aircraft," he said.

Upon arriving in Lwara, the situation had calmed and the unit was ready to receive the ammunition.

"It is hard to tell how the delivery affected the unit, since we were only on the ground for a short time. But from the size of the delivery, it is safe to say the unit was running very low on ammunition after the contact they had received earlier that day," said Hall.

Being able to supply other units is what the sling-load and ammunition teams of LTF 524 remain constantly prepared for, said White.

"It feels good to know that you are able to do something to help others," he said. "Even though we don't know the service members we helped, we know we made a difference and possibly saved (lives) by delivering the ammunition."



Sgt. Matthew Targgart (left) and 1st Lt. Jose Carmona, Logistics Task Force 524, hook up a pallet of ammunition to a CH-47 Chinook helicopter for delivery to Soldiers at FOB Lwara.



A CH-47 Chinook helicopter lifts off from FOB Salerno on its way to FOB Lwara for an ammunition resupply mission Oct. 9.

Maintaining readiness

Marine mechanics keep helos flying

Story and photos by Spc. Chris Stump
17th Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan — Most of the Marines maintaining the AH-1W Super Cobra and UH-1N Iroquois “Huey” series helicopters being flown in Afghanistan weren’t even born when the “birds” they work on entered service.

But the hard work and dedication of the small group of aircraft mechanics and crew chiefs of Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 773 operating out of Forward Operating Base Salerno has kept their machines up and flying a variety of missions in support of operations throughout the country.

The unit’s main task is flying in support of quick reaction force missions and escorting medical evacuation flights.

Keeping the helicopters in top mechanical condition means the difference between getting fire support to troops in contact on the ground or having them fight it out themselves with no air support.

Keeping the helicopters operating in peak condition starts with the flight line mechanics who are in charge of ensuring every aircraft is mission-ready at all times.

“We’re mostly a quick reaction force, so the birds have to be ready all the time,” said Marine Lance Cpl. Jason Cosby, HMLA 773 flight line mechanic.

Ensuring the helicopters are always ready means constant checks.

“Before the pilots sign for their bird at the beginning of their QRF shift, we open the entire aircraft up and go over everything,” he said.

This process includes checking every system, all the engine levels and inspecting for anything that looks out of the ordinary.

“The process is very detailed. Every component of the helicopter is checked by us at least twice,” said Cosby.

After the mechanics look over the aircraft, the pilots inspect the helicopters with the mechanics to ensure everything has had another look.

“As long as you do preventive maintenance, it’s very easy to keep them running,” said Cosby.

But if something does need to be fixed, the Marines are capable of fixing just about anything on either helicopter. Many crew chiefs and mechanics of HMLA 773 are cross-trained on both the Cobra and Iroquois.



Marine Cpl. Jason Bordas, an HMLA 773 avionics technician, tests the circuits of an AH-1W Super Cobra.

“Almost everything can be fixed here,” said Marine Staff Sgt. Clay Landry, HMLA 773 avionics crew chief.

Each Cobra helicopter has five different groups of mechanics who maintain



Marine Sgt. Eric Sharp, a UH-1N crew chief, cleans the windshield of a UH-1N Iroquois “Huey” helicopter at FOB Salerno.

them, providing expertise on every aspect of the aircraft.

“We (avionics) fix anything with a wire going to it, but there are flight line mechanics, ordnance loaders, airframe mechanics and flight equipment guys,” he said.

The avionics mechanics are responsible for fixing any electrical issues with their aircraft, including advanced systems like flight instrumentation and ensuring engine wiring is up to speed.

On the opposite side of the mechanical spectrum are the airframe mechanics, who ensure all the hydraulic systems are working as they should.

“Hydraulics pretty much control the birds, so the airframe guys are essential to the operation here,” said Cosby.

But everyone on the team is essential when it comes to keeping the aircraft in flight.

With all the mechanics available to work on the helicopters, the only time they need to go elsewhere for upkeep is to complete phase maintenance every 200 flying hours.

“During phase maintenance, we rebuild everything, so we rotate the aircraft out to (Bagram Air Base) to have a better place to work,” said Cosby.

This rebuilding includes nearly everything on the helicopter, including overhauling the engines.

“Out here, we do whatever it takes to keep them flying and supporting QRFs and MEDEVACs,” said Marine Sgt. Eric Sharp, HMLA 773, UH-1N crew chief and AH-1W mechanic.

As a crew chief, Sharp is ultimately responsible for ensuring his aircraft is always ready.

From checking the ammunition supply for the door guns to the seemingly small task of cleaning the windshields, everything he does plays a part in ensuring successful missions.

“It’s important to keep up on the small tasks and preventive maintenance,” he said. “In the end, it makes the job of keeping the aircraft up and ready to support missions much easier.”

CMOC Soldiers help Afghans help themselves

Story and photo by
Spc. Cheryl Ransford
17th Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan — The eventual goal of the reconstruction process in Afghanistan is for the people to be able to stand on their own.

In Khowst province, the civil military operations center is pioneering a way to speed up that process. Reconstruction is still occurring, but here, the Afghan people are learning how to facilitate the projects through their own government's resources, said Sgt. 1st Class Edith Horn, 412th Civil Affairs Battalion, Khowst CMOC commander.

"When we first arrived in Afghanistan, the people in the village would constantly come to us asking for schools and other projects to be done. Then we would take the request and make it happen," she said.

Now, the CMOC is helping the people understand how to use tools in place throughout the country for those kinds of requests.

The Afghan government is made up of ministries and departments that handle everything from road construction and repair to medical facilities and schools.

"While most CMOCs and PRTs are still handling the requests themselves, the people of Khowst are learning to rely on their own government," she said.

The process was slow to start, but now it has taken hold and the people seem very happy with the help and support they are receiving from the CMOC team.

Being able to work with and help the local national population has been a rewarding opportunity for Staff Sgt. Randel Harris, 551st Military Police Company, who works with the CMOC team as a trainer for the local police force.

"They are very willing and eager to learn how to help and protect themselves," he said. "It is a wonderful experience to be able to see them be able to rely on themselves. You can see on their faces how happy they are to be a more independent people."



Staff Sgt. Randel Harris, 551st MP Co., trains the local police force on proper riot control techniques.

While the people in Khowst are happy to be more independent, they still need help with procedures and are glad the CMOC team is available to provide this assistance.

"The people come to us, and they are happy to be able to receive the help they need to file the paperwork properly with the ministries and departments," said Horn. "We help gather information and assist them in preparing the information for the ministries."

The CMOC team is also teaching the local nationals how to get land rights and permis-

sion to build, as well as finding qualified teachers for new schools.

"The people are excited to be able to do the work themselves," said Harris. "Even though it's something new to them, they are learning the process quickly and not requiring as much help as they did in the beginning."

Once the ministries or departments have the requests, the head of the organization checks with the CMOC about actually completing the projects.

See Khowst, Page 15

Enduring Voices

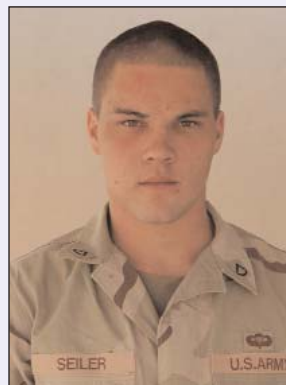
What is your favorite Thanksgiving food?



**Air Force
Staff Sgt. Thomas White**
455th EOG
"Deep-fried turkey."



Sgt. Chris Roland
2nd Bn., 27th Inf. Rgt.
"Mom's homemade dressing."



Pfc. Andrew Seiler
1st Bn., 505th PIR
"Honey-baked ham with pineapples."



Fikro Ibrakic
Ronco Demining
"Steak and bread with friends and family."

Soldiers refuel aircraft in remote location

Story and photo by
Sgt. Jennifer S. Emmons
17th Public Affairs Detachment

FIREBASE LAGMAN, Afghanistan — The Soldiers at the forward arming and refueling point in Zabul province are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to refuel and rearm aircraft in this southern region of Afghanistan.

Usually the Soldiers at the FARP receive a call on the radio, but the unexpected does happen and the aircraft will sometimes just show up, said Staff Sgt. Shane Hancock, 2nd Battalion, 25th Aviation Regiment.

"We'll hear the rotor blades and come out to the refueling site to refuel the aircraft," he said.

After the crew chief exits the aircraft, the refueler approaches.

"The first thing we do is ground the aircraft. Then we hook up the refueling nozzle," said Hancock. "The fuel is kept in bags and refueling trucks, which pump the fuel into the aircraft."

Depending on the type of aircraft and how much fuel it needs, it takes between seven and 15 minutes to refuel.

"After the aircraft is full of fuel, we'll disconnect the nozzle, unground the aircraft, they'll load their passengers and

we'll send them on their way," he said.

Speed is key in the refueling process.

"While (the aircraft) are in the air, they are much harder to hit," said Hancock. "The more time they spend on the ground, the better chance the enemy has to get a focused shot. The quicker we get them out of here, the better for everybody."

Safety is essential when working with fuel and running engines.

"One of the most important parts of safety is keeping eye contact with everybody who's out here," said Sgt. Lucille Reese, 2nd Bn., 25th Avn. Rgt. "Also, making sure our equipment's grounded to make sure there aren't any fires and maintain the static electricity that the aircraft produces (is key)."

"Sometimes the job can be dangerous," said Hancock. "But we are all well-trained, and we know the precautions. We all know how to stay safe out here."

The FARP is essential to the aviation mission in southern Afghanistan.

"Fuel is the backbone of the military," said Staff Sgt. Leon Green, 131st Aviation Regiment. "We can't move without fuel."

"The enemy is out here in these mountains somewhere," he said. "This is where the



Three UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters take off after receiving fuel from the FARP. The FARP provides fuel and ammunition support to aircraft that land at Firebase Lagman.

infantry is and where we need the fuel."

Having these fueling sites far from the main air fields in the country assists with the mobility of the troops.

"It's a long way back to Kandahar (Airfield)," said Hancock. "Sometimes the aircraft's mission, like protection of a convoy or following a patrol, doesn't allow them to fly back to Kandahar to get fuel. So having fuel out here is very important. They can stop in here ... to receive fuel and ammunition, whatever they need, and fly back out to do their mission."

The team of Soldiers at this FARP is one of four teams working throughout southern Afghanistan.

"We are just part of a small platoon out here at different forward locations," said Hancock. "If the aircraft need fuel or ammunition, we're here to give them that."

Working closely at remote locations has made these Soldiers better at their jobs.

"Everybody in my team is great," said Pfc. Brandon Newsome, 2nd Bn., 25th Avn. Rgt. "They've really shown me the ropes. I would say they are the best at what they do."

Being part of this essential aspect of the mission is a great experience, said Reese.

"When I stop and think about what we're doing out here, it's a good feeling," he said, "knowing that I'm doing this for my family back home."

AAFES SERVICES HOURS OF OPERATION

Bagram Air Base

PX	Massage
0230-1630	0400-1800
Shoppette	Alterations
0230-1630	0430-1430
Burger King	Embroidery Shop
0430-1730	0430-1430
Food Court	Gift Shops
0600-1630	0430-1430
Barber Shop	Sports Apparel
0430-1530	0430-1430
Day Spa	Coffee Shop
0400-1600	Opening Soon

Kandahar Airfield

PX	Alterations
0500-1700	0500-1700
Burger King	Embroidery Shop
0430-1730	0500-1700
Coffee Shop	Gift Shops
24hrs	0500-1700
Main Barber Shop	Sports Apparel
0500-1700	0500-1700
Lagoon Barber Shop	Black Ops Store
0300-1700	0500-1700
Day Spa	Leather Shop
0500-1700	0500-1700

TF Phoenix

PX
0430-1630
Barber Shop
0330-1530
Alterations
0330-1630
Coffee Shop
24 hours

CFC-A

PX
0430-1630
Barber Shop
0330-1530

** All times in Zulu/GMT*

Trigger Time

Female crew chief trains for combat ops

Story and photo by
Marine Staff Sgt. Rusty Baker
Marine Aircraft Group-41

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan — Not far from the jagged, mountainous terrain of the border between Afghanistan and Pakistan, a fortified helicopter base keeps a vigilant watch for terrorist activity. A sandstorm looms ever so close to the base, rendering flight operations to that of essential purpose only.

However, there is still time to give a

rookie helicopter crew chief a chance to practice shooting one of the door mounted machine guns over a nearby firing range. But there is one striking difference between this door gunner and others within the tight-knit group of crew chiefs in Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 773 presently at Forward Operating Base Salerno — the rookie is a female.

Marine Lance Cpl. Kay Barnes, a 30-year-old reservist originally from Richmond Hill, Ga., performs a walk-around final check of her UH-1N

Iroquois “Huey” gunship.

As an extra precaution from falling out of the helicopter, she straps a gunner’s belt to her desert-clad body armor and fastens the clip to the floor of the aircraft.

Barnes admits that when deciding on a career in the Marine Corps Reserve, she didn’t want something that she could do just as easily in the civilian world — she wanted combat. Now that her squadron has been mobilized and deployed to Afghanistan, she’ll probably get her chance.

“I didn’t see (myself) sitting around while my country was going to war without me,” said Barnes.

It wasn’t the images of jetliners going through the twin towers that made her answer the call. She said watching her country going to war on television, knowing she had an opportunity to be a part of it and do something useful, took her to the local recruiting station in Athens, Ga.

Barnes has only been at FOB Salerno for a few weeks, and her lack of experience keeps her from going on quick reaction force missions that are often conducted in the cover of darkness.

But once she proves herself with more “trigger time” on the nearby firing range, Barnes will find herself providing ground maintenance under the direction of her



Marine Lance Cpl. Kay Barnes, HMLA 773 crew chief, readies her M-240D for firing as the UH-1N Iroquois “Huey” banks hard to the left for a pass over the firing range at FOB Salerno.

See **HMLA 773**, Page 15

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD

A United Kingdom detachment, comprised of personnel from the British Royal Air Force Cottesmore and other units throughout the United Kingdom, deployed to Kandahar Airfield Aug. 28 in support of the arrival of 6 Harrier GR7 aircraft from 3 (Fighter) Squadron. The detachment provides close air support and reconnaissance in support of International Security Assistance Force and other Coalition force elements operating in Afghanistan.

Photo by Senior Aircraftmen Steve Buckley, British Royal Air Force Detachment

If you have high quality photos of service members supporting the Coalition mission or enjoying well-deserved off-duty time, please e-mail them to carls@baf.afgn.army.mil. Please include full identification and caption information, including who is in the photo and what action is taking place.





Marine Staff Sgt. Rusty Baker

Sgt. Rachel Campbell (left), 159th MEDEVAC Co., Wiesbaden, Germany, helps members of the 325th Field Surgical Team at FOB Salerno unload 3rd Battalion, 6th Marines Lance Cpl. Aaron Grossman from a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter Oct. 7. Grossman clutches his combat boot that was shredded by an IED blast.

Flight medics stand by to save lives

Story by Spc. Cheryl Ransford
17th Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan — Almost every day a medical evacuation is needed somewhere across Afghanistan. It can be for a Coalition member, an Afghan soldier or an Afghan national — and sometimes even the enemy.

The men and women who fly to the remote areas of the country to help save these people's lives are the men and women of the medical evacuation teams at Bagram Air Base, Kandahar Airfield and Forward Operating Base Salerno.

"The units that make up the MEDEVAC team in Afghanistan are from Hawaii, Alaska and Germany," said Sgt. Michael Treadway, 68th MEDEVAC Company, Fort Wainwright, Alaska.

Regardless of the location, the service members are standing by for the call to

save someone's life, he said.

"When the call comes in that we are needed, we can be in the air in seven minutes. During the seven minutes before the flight, we make sure we have all the details of the mission we are going on, to make sure we have everything we need, such as an extra litter and another medic," said Treadway.

"When we go up, we have a basic idea of what to expect when we get to the patient, but nothing is ever as you plan," said Staff Sgt. Makonen Campbell, 159th MEDEVAC Company, Wiesbaden, Germany.

Having been deployed to Iraq and now Afghanistan, Campbell has performed a variety of MEDEVAC missions.

"One of the hardest things about being a flight medic in a third-world country is seeing the kids that get hurt by things kids shouldn't have to worry about, such as gun shots, land mines and falling from

balconies because there's no railing," he said. "But at the same time, the local population doesn't see these things as odd. For them, these are normal injuries."

While the difference in culture isn't always an easy concept to understand, it is even harder when the MEDEVAC team picks up a fallen comrade, said Campbell.

"The hardest part of the job for me is picking up the injured GI's. You never know if it's going to be one of your friends, a fellow comrade or someone one of your coworkers knows," he said.

Though the missions can sometimes be hard to handle, the flight medics at FOB Salerno have found a way to make it through the hard times.

"Sometimes the upside is hard to find," said Campbell. "But we stay positive and remember that we are here to help our fellow Soldiers. Being able to do that day after day, keeps us going back and doing it again tomorrow."

IN CASE OF FIRE ...

Air Force firemen remain ready to respond

Story and photos by
Spc. Cheryl Ransford
17th Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan — With safety in the forefront of everyone's minds, having firefighters ready and standing by is important when an emergency happens on base.

The fire department at Forward Operating Base Salerno is run by four Airmen from Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan, who respond to most emergencies here.

The types of emergencies the team is prepared to react



Air Force Senior Airman Sean Barnette, 376th ECES, replaces and secures the lid on the reservoir of the fire truck after ensuring it is full for the next mission.

to range from aircraft and tent fires to overturned vehicles, said Air Force Senior Airman Sean Barnette, 376th Expeditionary Civil Engineer

Squadron.

"By having a team of trained firemen on base to react to emergencies, the chances of something getting out of control are lessened," he said.

One of the main roles of the firemen is ensuring the aircraft land without any problems.

"We are on the flight line, ready to go, every time a prop-type aircraft lands, in case something were to happen during landing," said Barnette.

While the firemen work with the aircraft most of the time, they are also ready to handle just about any other type of emergency that may arise, said Air Force Airman 1st Class Joshua Flagle, 376th ECES.

Since most of the personnel at FOB Salerno live and work in tents, the biggest concern is electrical fires inside the tents.

"Fire is a huge thing, especially in a place where people spend most of their time in flammable structures," said Flagle. "If one of the tents was to catch fire, it would burn down in three minutes or less, and most likely spread to the tents surrounding it."

Since the firemen on Salerno have such a critical role in ensuring the personnel

assigned to the FOB are safe, they rotate out every two weeks with other trained firemen from their unit in Manas.

"There is a total of 39 firefighters who rotate through Salerno," said Barnette. "We rotate out so that no one gets complacent. Every person will experience something different than the person who he replaced or who comes after him."

To help the firefighters do their job in an efficient manner, they are supplied with two P-19B Fire Crash Vehicles, each with a 2,000-gallon capacity.

"Because of the P-19B's design, we are able to fight both aircraft and structural fires with the same vehicle," said Barnette.

"Unlike the original model of the P-19, the P-19B has a roof turret and a bumper turret, along with three hoses, to fight fires."

The roof and bumper turrets are mainly used for aircraft fires, while the hoses can be carried into areas the truck can't get to for fighting structural fires.

While fire emergencies on FOB Salerno are rare, the firemen are also trained to help in medical emergencies, said Flagle.

"Each of the firefighters who rotate through Salerno are either first responders, which are trained in basic emergency response, or they are trained emergency medical technicians, who are trained in wound management and basic pre-hospital care," he said.

While the faces of the fire fighters at FOB Salerno change regularly, the level of service provided is consistent to ensure properly-trained personnel are on site in the event of an emergency.



Barnette pulls Sgt. Michael Nettles, 68th MEDEVAC Co., Fort Wainwright, Alaska, from a UH-60 Blackhawk during a training exercise simulating rescuing personnel from an aircraft fire at FOB Salerno.

OEF siblings meet in 'sweet' reunion

Story and photo by
Air Force Staff Sgt. Jennifer Lindsey
455th Expeditionary Operations Group

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — Family reunions may seem sappy to some. But for two maple syrup farming siblings deployed to Afghanistan, such meetings are truly sweet, especially after a three-year separation.

Air Force Reserve Tech. Sgt. Rebecca Jo Allen, deployed to Bagram Air Base from Pope Air Force Base, N.C., and Army Reserve Chief Warrant Officer Tim Gaby, deployed from Ft. Wayne, Ind., celebrated the chief's promotion to "third-block status" at Kandahar Airfield Oct. 20.

The noncommissioned officer and chief warrant officer are the children of Jack Gaby, who still manages the family farm in northeastern Indiana.

During their short time together, Allen and Gaby caught up on family events, shared photographs and reminisced about growing up on the family farm together 30-plus years ago. Gaby is the youngest of the family, just one year

younger than his sister.

Allen is a 455th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron passenger terminal night-shift manager, and her brother is the 221st Ordnance Company ammunition supply point accountable officer.

In civilian life, Allen, a mother of two, is a full-time administrative assistant for Greene Lamp, Inc., a community action agency in Kinston, N.C., and Gaby helps his father manage the farm and works full-time as a mechanic for Parker Hannifin, a local factory.

The only way the reservists could field such demanding schedules while deployed is with the support of their communities.

"Serving in Afghanistan has been an amazing experience. Women from my office just don't do stuff like this, especially at age 45!" said Allen with a laugh. "But, I certainly couldn't do it without the help and support of friends and neighbors."

While away, neighbors voluntarily help her by mowing the lawn, picking up newspapers and caring for her teenage daughter. Allen's husband, a truck driver, makes it home weekly, with barely enough time to get ready for his next haul, and her son is away at naval technical school.

Growing up in rural Indiana has served the siblings well, who said they still tap into the small-town lessons they



Chief Warrant Officer Tim Gaby (center), 221st Ord. Co. ammunition supply point accountable officer, receives his new rank Oct. 20 from his sister, Air Force Tech. Sgt. Rebecca Jo Allen, 455th ELRS passenger terminal night-shift manager, and 1st Lt. Paul Spelock, 221st Ord. Co. ASP officer in charge.

learned so many years ago.

"The values of working hard and continuing until the job is done right comes into play for me every day," said Gaby. "In ammo, accountability of each and every munition weighs in as much as safety on the job."

If a single bullet isn't logged correctly, troops must count inventory until the missing item is properly accounted for, sometimes well past the shift's end.

For Allen, physical strength and maintaining a sense of humor go a long way on the flight line.

"At times I have to load rucksacks weighing 70 pounds or more over my head to get them onto the cargo aircraft — some I can barely lift," said Allen. "It's a lot like when we were kids loading bales of hay onto the hay wagon."

Teamwork is one value the siblings have both found indispensable in their support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The two not only practice teamwork on deployment, but have also benefited from the team spirit of people back home who support them as they serve on the opposite side of the globe.

"When you activate a reservist, you activate an entire hometown community," said Allen. "The real 'Hometown Heroes' are the ones who make it possible for us to serve in Afghanistan by making sure the homefront runs smoothly in our absence."



Gaby surprises his sister Allen with a quart of maple syrup from the family farm Oct. 19. They saw each other for the first time in three years during their deployment to Afghanistan.

Parental guidance takes on new meaning in OEF

Story and photo by
Sgt. Jennifer S. Emmons
17th Public Affairs Detachment

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — A young Soldier completes his work on the hydraulic line of an OH-58D Kiowa "Warrior" helicopter. He then calls the technical inspector to come to the shop and inspect the quality of his work.

"Hey, Dad," said Pfc. Glenn Alana, Company B, 193rd Aviation Regiment, hydraulic specialist. "Will you check out this line?"

"Sure, boy," said Staff Sgt. Allan Alana, Co. B, 193rd Avn. Rgt., technical inspector.

This father-son mechanical duo is deployed to Afghanistan with their Hawaii National Guard unit.

"We are both in the Guard back in Hawaii," said Allan. "I volunteered to come over, because I wanted to be with my unit."

The Alana's company is the aviation intermediate maintenance company for Task Force Diamondhead, the aviation task force in southern Afghanistan.

"We do maintenance that the units aren't able to do," said Allan. "The crew chiefs can't fabricate new lines and other types of maintenance. They will send us anything they can't fix, and we will do the maintenance or just order a new part."

The younger Alana fabricates hydraulic lines for aircraft.

"I will make new lines if the old one has a crack or wear," said Glenn.

After these repairs are made, the technical inspector steps in to verify the work.

The technical inspector of an AVIM unit provides another set of eyes on any piece of work, a crucial part of the maintenance process, said Allan.

"All the kids do quality work. But when it comes to aviation, there is no room for error," he said. "Everything that comes out of this shop has my stamp of approval, and that means that everything must be quality."

"Doing the best quality work is so important, because everyone who flies on the aircraft is trusting us with their safety," said Glenn.

But most mechanics don't have their father serving as their technical inspector, a situation that has been "interesting," he said.

"We have a great relationship. I respect him so much," said Glenn. "He's been doing this for 30 years and knows so much. I learn something new every day."

"We have a great relationship. I respect him so much."

Working together in a deployed environment is a different experience and presents its own challenges for the father and son.

"Sometimes we carry ourselves as father and son," said Allan. "It's like 'Hey, Dad, come check this out,' or 'Hey, boy, we're going to do something. But we know when to act like private and (noncommissioned officer).'"

"At one point it's okay to call him Dad," said Glenn. "But when certain people are



Staff Sgt. Allan Alana (front) inspects a hydraulic line while his son, Pfc. Glenn Alana, pressure tests it. Both Alanas are Hawaii National Guard aviation mechanics serving together at Kandahar Airfield.

around it's 'sergeant this' and 'sergeant that.' Then later in the day, I'll be like 'Hey, come by the tent and get some cook-out, Dad.' It's just knowing when to be professional and when to be personal."

Deployments often bring people closer together because they are away from their family. But for the Alana's, they each have a big piece of home with them.

"I have some of my family here, and it makes it easier," said Glenn.

Working together on a professional level has developed their relationship beyond just father and son.

"Even though I've known him for the past 26

years, I haven't worked with him. He's never been my supervisor," said Glenn. "Over here, you learn a different respect, and it's more professional. We've gotten to learn the professional side of each other instead of just having a father-son relationship."

Working together is great, said the elder Alana.

"I get to see him learn things and become better at his job," said Allan.

Respect has been the foundation for the two men's relation-

ship throughout the years. This experience has only served to strengthen that bond.

"I respect him in different ways than I did before," said Glenn. "I respected him a lot prior to coming over here. I'm pretty sure I wouldn't be where I am in life today without him. But coming here, I respect him in different ways. He's taught me a lot. He's the inspector of my work and he knows so much more from his years of experience. But sometimes, I know something that he doesn't and he always listens to me."

"Even though he is my son," added Allan.

"I treat all the young Soldiers like they were my kids. They teach us as much as we teach them. Us old timers and all, we still ask them questions, and they like that."

After a year in Afghanistan, the father and son will return to their home in Hawaii with an experience most families can only dream of.

"I think we will have a special bond," said Glenn.

"I think our relationship will be different than most people back home or wherever we are at. We've learned to respect different things about each other and we'll put that into play."

Burger King opens at Kandahar Airfield

Story and photo by
Spc. Claudia K. Bullard
105th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan — Kandahar Airfield in southeastern Afghanistan is about as far from home as many Coalition troops can get, so the Army and Air Force Exchange Service has brought a taste of home a little closer to them.

Oct. 6 marked the long-awaited opening of Burger King here by AAFES concessions. Now U.S. and Coalition forces and civilians working on base can get the “fresh, fire-grilled taste” of Burger King at Kandahar. Another Burger King concession is located at Bagram Air Base near the capital city of Kabul.

Lines were lengthy on opening day, wrapping around the boardwalk that marks the shopping and meeting area. One customer sitting on a bench enjoying a Burger King Whopper said, “Burger King is not bad, but when you haven’t had it for a while, it’s real good.”

Lisa Martin, AAFES food business manager — Afghanistan, said customer feed-

back was very positive during the preparatory phase, and emphasized that customer convenience is one of AAFES’ main concerns.

“We want to make sure everyone will have a chance to get a Whopper,” said Martin.

The Burger Kings, which are owned by AAFES and operated by a concessionaire, will offer the same available promotions and menus that are offered at AAFES’ Burger King restaurants in Germany, said Martin.

However, because of sanitation and storage issues, limiting the menu slightly

has been necessary.

“The concessionaire is responsible for supplying veterinarian-approved products and the control of safe service of them. They also hire their own staff. Along with the veterinarian, AAFES monitors sanitation and performance to assure U.S. operating and health standards are met,” said Martin.

“Have it your way” has been a long-standing trademark of Burger King, which first opened in Miami, Fla., in 1954 and now has stores in 60 countries. For those wary of the health concerns that eating fast food can bring, Burger King has a Web site where customers can build their own meal and then add up calories, carbohydrates and fat. This includes adding or subtracting items such as condiments. For instance, according to www.burgerking.com, when you skip the ketchup, “you’ll save three grams of carbs per packet.”

“I see Burger King bringing all of our hard-working troops who put their lives on the line every day, a little taste of home,” said Martin, adding that the Burger Kings will remain in place until the bases close.



Religious Services Around the CJOA

CFC-A

Sunday

0500 - Small Group Study
0630 - Traditional Prot.
1000 - Prot. Service - U.S. Emb.
1330 - Catholic Mass - Italian Emb.
1430 - Prot. Contemporary Praise
1530 - Small Group Study 201
1530 - Small Group Study 301

Tuesday

0930 - Chaplain's Call

Wednesday

1400 - Small Group Study 401

Friday

0830 - Latter-Day Saints
1330 - Jewish Service
1330 - Small Group Study 101

Saturday

0930 - Chaplain's Call
1130 - Catholic Mass

Camp Phoenix

Sunday

0430 - Catholic (Italian)
0530 - Non-Denominational Prot.
1330 - Catholic (French)
1530 - Non-Denominational Prot.

Tuesday

1430 - Bible Study

Wednesday

1430 - Gospel Bible Study

Saturday

1430 - Gospel Worship Service

FOB Salerno

Sunday

0300 - Foundations Bible Class
0400 - Traditional Prot. Worship
0530 - Latter-Day Saints Worship
0830 - Gospel Service
1400 - Inspirational Movie Night

Saturday

1500 - Contemporary Prot.

Bagram Air Base

Sunday

0400 - Liturgical Prot.
0530 - Roman Catholic Mass
0830 - Latter-Day Saints
0700 - Traditional Prot.
1115 - Korean Language Prot.
1300 - Gospel Service

Monday

1400 - Gospel Choir Rehearsal

Tuesday

1400 - Gospel Bible Study
1545 - Prot. Music Rehearsal

Wednesday

1600 - Catholic Music Rehearsal

Thursday

1430 - Gospel Choir Rehearsal

Friday

1430 - Jewish Prayer
1500 - Women's Bible Study

Saturday

0500 - Seventh-Day Adventist
1330 - Korean Choir Rehearsal
1515 - Roman Catholic Mass
1630 - Prot. Choir Rehearsal

Daily, Monday-Friday

0700 - Roman Catholic Mass
0745 - Noon-Day prayer

Kandahar Airfield

Sunday

0430 - Catholic Mass
0500 - Bible Study (325th FSB)
0630 - Prot. Worship
1330 - Gospel Choir Practice
1400 - Sunday School
1530 - Gospel Service

Monday

1300 - Gospel Choir Practice

Tuesday

1430 - Purpose-driven Life Study
1300 - Gospel Choir Practice
1430 - Praise Team Practice
1530 - Bible Study

Wednesday

1300 - Gospel Choir Practice
1430 - Praise Team Practice
1530 - Prot. Worship

Thursday

1430 - Praise Team Practice
1500 - Latter-Day Saints

Friday

0830 - Islamic Prayers
1330 - Jewish Sabbath Prayers

Saturday

0400 - Men's Breakfast
1300 - Catholic Mass
1430 - Praise Team Practice

Daily, Monday-Friday

0330 - Catholic Mass

* All times
Zulu/GMT

Leaders, training key to construction safety

Safeguarding the Coalition

Story and photo by Spc. Chris Stump
17th Public Affairs Detachment

AFGHANISTAN — Self-help improvement projects are commonly undertaken by personnel to make their mission more successful and their lives more comfortable.

Whether the improvements are to something expansive like a runway or to something smaller-scale like a B-Hut, it takes personnel, tools and safety to accomplish the task.

And whether the craftsman is a full-time construction worker or a Sunday afternoon carpenter, safety is a key concern when personnel are using potentially dangerous equipment.

From hammers and nails to circular saws, there are many tools to help accomplish a job. But using these tools requires the operator to have a working knowledge of the equipment before he starts a project.

"If you don't use a piece of equipment properly, you'll hurt yourself. People have to make sure they know what they're doing," said Sgt. 1st Class Richard Griffin, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 367th Engineer Battalion, safety noncommissioned officer.

Before undertaking even a small project like building shelves in living quarters, people need to familiarize themselves with the workings of tools they will use.

Leaders are key to ensuring their troops know what they're doing before they begin any project.

"NCOs need to make sure their Soldiers are trained on the equipment before they let them use it, and they need to make sure they're doing it right," said Chief Warrant Officer Robert Gunderson, HHC, 367th Eng. Bn., vertical construction officer in charge.

Using a piece of equipment properly also means using the right tool for the right job.

"A lot of people get hurt because they don't use the right equipment," said Gunderson.

Knowing what a piece of equipment is intended to be used for before using it is important.

NCOs and other leaders also play an important role in this aspect. Showing sub-



Spc. Amy Carlson, HHC, 367th Eng. Bn., welds part of a construction project on Bagram Air Base. Although the projects most personnel participate in don't require a welder, the safety gear worn should be appropriate for the task at hand.

ordinates how to properly use tools and keeping a watchful eye on troops to see that the task is being accomplished safely is key.

As with any safety issue, there is also personal responsibility.

"Everyone is a safety out here," said Griffin. "I'm just the safety who's on paper."

Although leaders should be checking their personnel, individuals need to realize the importance of protecting their own life and limbs.

"Safety glasses are one of the most important – and easily forgotten – things people can wear to protect themselves," he said.

Wearing eye protection is a sight-saver when working on a jobsite where objects can easily be sent flying toward a person's face.

According to Prevent Blindness America, nearly 1,000 eye injuries occur each day in the United States alone. Almost all of these injuries, 20 percent of which result in permanent blindness, could be prevented by the use of protective eyewear.

Another irreparable bodily injury is hearing loss. Damage to one's sense of hearing is also just as easily prevented as eye injuries.

"We always stress not just eye protection, but ear protection, too," said Gunderson.

When working around equipment that emits high noise levels, earplugs or other forms of hearing protection must be worn to prevent hearing loss.

This is especially important when working in enclosed areas where noise is trapped and reverberates, potentially causing worse damage, said Gunderson.

Another common injury on the jobsite is head injury.

Protecting against head injuries is as simple as wearing a hardhat or Kevlar helmet. Helmets will take the brunt of a blow from falling objects and save the wearer from a life-threatening injury.

There are many hazards around a worksite, but there are just as many ways to avoid them. It is a leader's responsibility to ensure prevention methods are being adhered to and train personnel on the proper way to utilize the tools available to them. Individuals must also take precautions to protect themselves and those around them.

"Make sure you know what you're doing," said Griffin. "If you don't know what you're doing, ask someone to help. It's an NCO's job to help keep people safe."

Runners complete half-marathon for charity

Treadmill race raises \$4,000 to benefit Afghans

Story by Lt. Col. Susan H. Meisner
Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan — It was a beautiful, sunny day in Afghanistan, with just a little nip in the air — perfect for a half-marathon. But the weather didn't really matter — this 21-kilometer race was inside, on treadmills.

A marathon on treadmills may sound odd to most. But considering the alternative of weaving in and out of the front and rear parking lots of tiny Kabul Compound, which produces a nearly quarter-mile run route, a treadmill race just made sense.

Air Force Col. Linda Medler even hatched the idea of a half-marathon while on a treadmill.

"I do my best thinking on the treadmill," said Medler, 97th Mission Support Group commander, Altus Air Force Base, Okla.

"I knew the general (Air Force Maj. Gen. Craig Weston, chief of the Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan) encourages fun ways to raise money for charity, and so we wanted to do something a little different."

Working with Col. Oliver Custead, Medler developed the idea for a competition.

"We knew military personnel are competitive, so we'd make more money if we tied a competition to raising money. It would also be an opportunity to let off steam and benefit local charities, too."

Six teams signed up: Air Force, Army, Marines, Military Professional Resource Inc. contractors, British and Coalition. But some teams had more trouble than others come race day.

Air Force Maj. Cindi Chiaravalloti, deployed from the headquarters of the United States' 16th Air Force, Aviano, Italy, competed for the Marine team, which had



a few no-shows and was renamed the Joint team.

"It was hard, but I'm happy the Air Force could help out the Marines today," said Chiaravalloti.

The Army team lost its best runner to blisters suffered from a ruck march before race day. Everyone had a story.

"I did the first mile about right, but my second was too quick," said British Army Col. Bob Sharp, OMC-A chief of staff and a native of Oxford, England.

Canadian Maj. Jim Fitzgerald, who deployed from the 38th Brigade Headquarters to Combined Forces Command – Afghanistan planning staff, ran on the Coalition Team.

"Where is the Navy today?" he asked. They were nowhere in sight.

Capt. James Sorgius, 76th Separate Infantry Brigade, Indiana National Guard, was the last guy on the slowest team and had just this to say, "I finished." But, he also noted, it was "all for a good cause."

Team members raised more than \$4,000 in pledges, which will benefit local Afghan charities.

"OMC-A sponsors two daycare centers — at the Ministry of Defense and the sewing factory, which employs war widows. We will also contribute to an orphanage for boys and a girls' school," said Medler.

The \$4,000 pledged is double the pre-race goal of \$2,000.

"The pledges got family members back home involved," said Medler, whose fami-



Master Sgt. D. Keith Johnson

Above: Capt. Dennis Mankus (left), runs for the Joint team, while Air Force Col. Kevin Bell brings the race home for the Air Force.

Top: British team members and supporters cheer on British Lt. Col. Colin Danvers. The British team received the "Most Spirited" award.

ly and friends sponsored the Air Force team.

The MPRI team, whose employees at OMC-A serve as mentors to the Afghan Ministry of Defense staff, came in first at 93:44. The British team, at 94:06, came in second and was voted "Most Spirited." The Air Force team raised the most pledges — almost \$2,000.

Hank Allen, MPRI team member from Alexandria, Va., a Strategy and Policy mentor and member of the fastest team, summed it up best by saying it was all "good fun."

**Let your unit's
story be heard.**

**Submit your stories,
photos or story ideas to
the Freedom Watch at
carls@baf.afgn.army.mil**

HMLA 773: Rookie crew chief gets combat experience

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noncommissioned officers. Regardless of the work being done, she feels that being in Afghanistan is a great opportunity.

"I didn't expect a vacation out here. I expect to perform as part of a team and accomplish missions as they arrive," she said.

"They told me when I checked into my squadron they didn't care if I were male or female, as long as I could carry a 50-caliber," said Barnes. The GAU-16 50-caliber machine gun weighs approximately 65 pounds.

So far, most of Barnes' experience is with the 7.62 mm M-240D machine gun, but she is excited to get some trigger time with the 3,000 rounds-per-minute, 7.62 mm GAU-17 Gatling-style "mini-gun."

Because of the relatively small size of the Huey, an aircrew – two pilots, a left and right door gunner, and the optional aerial observer – can develop a common bond that can last for years.

"A crew's a family," said Marine Sgt. Eric "Sideshow" Sharp, HMLA 773 crew chief. "(Pilots) rely on us to back them up on the gauges, and we rely on them to shake the sticks right and keep us out of the dirt."

Being a door gunner is just one of the many duties performed both in the air and on the ground. There are also daily aircraft inspections and maintenance, loading and unloading of passengers, and responsibilities of external equipment such as rocket pods.

However, Barnes isn't the first female door gunner in the Marine Corps, nor the first at FOB Salerno.

Humbly, she admits she has rather large shoes to fill with some of the now combat veteran female door gunners that her detachment relieved.

Not yet engaging the enemy, she said she doesn't know what type of emotions she may bring back from the crosshairs of her machine gun. She doesn't feel particularly "uptight" about the possibilities, she's more concerned about her performance in the aircraft and ensuring she never does anything to jeopardize her fellow crewmembers.

For now, more range time is prescribed before she'll get that chance.

"As far as I'm concerned, the bad guys have it coming," she said. "If it's in the best interests of America, then it's in my best interests."

Letters to the Editor

The *Freedom Watch* would like to publish your opinions and comments on topics of importance and interest to those serving in Operation Enduring Freedom.

Please send your thoughts and feelings in letter form to the editor. All letters e-mailed to the editor must include full name, unit, address and, when possible, telephone number. We will not print anonymous letters. Please limit all letters to 200 words or less.

We reserve the right to edit letters for length, clarity and decorum.

Please send your letters to: carls@baf.afgn.army.mil

We look forward to hearing from you!

Honolulu Marathon in Afghanistan

The "Bobcats" of 2nd Bn., 5th Inf. Rgt. will be hosting their own Honolulu Marathon at Forward Operating Base Ripley Dec. 12.

The race will start at 0130(Z). The race is approximately five laps around the base.

The race is open to all service members and civilians throughout the Coalition, based on command approval.

Transportation will be available from Bagram Air Base and Kandahar Airfield Dec. 11, and return transportation Dec. 13.

– Runners do not have to complete a full marathon. Run your own race.

– All runners will receive a Honolulu Marathon Packet, race number, T-shirt/hats, runner goodie bag and medals.

– Race will utilize the Champion Chip system – chip for each runner will allow live Internet timing. (Families back home will be able to see your times and track your progress.)

– Training runs will be conducted every Thursday at 0100(Z). To attend training runs, meet at the FOB Ripley chapel.

– Registration for the Marathon is free online. Contact Capt. Hurlburt (TF S6) to register at DSN/tactical (303) 523-9588 or hurlburti@baf.afgn.army.mil. Deadline for registration is Nov. 16.

Khowst: Locals take control of improvements

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For instance, if someone comes in with a request for a school, a road and a well, the CMOC personnel advise the villagers to select the projects that will help the village more.

"In this instance, if there are already several wells, we will focus on the schools and the roads," said Horn. "The schools are important because the children need to learn so the future of Afghanistan can continue to improve, and the roads are important because without roads the people can't get to the stores and the economy in the village will not grow."

The biggest part of the CMOC mission now is to get the ministry heads to work with the city planning director who is appointed by the governor, said Horn.

"Right now, we are holding bi-monthly meetings with the city planner and the ministry heads," she said. "The ministries state their interest and priorities for what they want done in the village."

The most important part of the civil affairs mission in Khowst is that it focuses on the people, said Horn.

"The best part of what we are doing now is that the mission is about what they want for their villages, districts and country. Not about what we want," she said. "It's great to see the people of Afghanistan stand up for what they want. Watching them grow ... is a beautiful experience."

Diligence

